

648 about the lack of concern shown toward the Bedouins throughout
177 the history of their relations with the Nile Valley: they
829 complain that the Egyptians have no right to take over the
desert and order their lives for them. They say that "the
Egyptians know nothing about the desert"; that "they do not
know how to live in the desert and should take our advice on
these things." "They (the Egyptians) have given us nothing,
we had all of this before they came. Jamal Abd al-Nasser did
not invent socialism (Ishtarikiyya): the Bedouins have
always had it. We have always shared and taken care of one
another." The Egyptians are still "outsiders" to the Bedouins.
They are referred to as "fallahin" or "peasants."

Interestingly enough, the Bedouins include President
Nasser in their own in-group. They insist, in a half-serious
way, that he is of the Awlad 'Ali because he is originally
from Upper Egypt. One can compare the roles of Nasser and
the Grand Sanusi in some ways. Both leaders made special
• (778) efforts to bring the Bedouins into a new community, to share
their "good fortune" with them; also, both leaders are con-
sidered to be possessors of charisma, or baraka ("blessing")
by the Bedouins. One may hear unkind remarks about "holy
men" or "government officials," but never about Nasser or the
al-Sanusi family. One Bedouin said: "Jamal Abd al-Nasser works
hard and tries to do good for the people, but his officials are
000 very lazy and do not care about us." While the Bedouins

While the Bedouins

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[778] respect the Sanusi family they, nevertheless, wear their religion lightly. An informant, speaking of the merits and demerits of the conservative Muslim Brethern Association, said that "you should never listen to a holy man, for he will lead you straight to hell!" But upon meeting any member of the Sanusi family, all Bedouins greet him by kissing his hand. Besides a show of deference, this ritual act, in theory, transfers baraka from al-Sanusi to the layman.

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641 The citizenship exemptions granted the Bedouins by Muhammad 'Ali have been rescinded by Abd al-Nasser. This has been one aspect of his program to imbue the Bedouin with political consciousness and promote participation in the nation-state. The Bedouins say that this is the way it should be: they want the right to own land and to accept the responsibility of defending the homeland. But they still do [65] not pay land taxes, and they feel justified in this because the desert "is very poor soil, and not like that of the Nile." Nor do they always heed the call to military duty, though they insist that they do.

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423 Egyptian land reform laws would be impractical, or impossible to apply, in al-Qasr. In the Nile Valley, such laws were necessary. The majority of the Egyptian peasants can survive on less than one acre of land, and farms of under five acres comprise 44 per cent of the agricultural land area in the Nile Valley (Warriner 1962:204). Plots this

67) I checked the contents of this document with 201
[124] my own informants who agreed that it was authentic and
represented the 'awaiyid' as it should be practiced. Almost
[682] the whole of the 'awaiyid' refers to the circumstances sur-
rounding the occurrence of killing and the payment of the
[128] diiya. The case studies which I present below reflect the
'awaiyid' as it was practiced in 1935.

682 Blood-money is calculated relative to three things:
whether or not a killing was premeditated or accidental; the
sex of the victim; and whether or not the victim was a freeman
or a slave. The full diiya is paid in the case of intentional
killing, and three-fourths of this amount is due in the case
[562] of accidental killing. The diiya for a woman is one-half
that for a man whether or not the killing is intentional.
[567] There are no slaves in al-Qasr, only their descendents who
are now freemen. In the case where a pregnant woman is killed,
the foetus will be examined and should it prove to be a male
then the full diiya will be due.

578 An important mechanism for conflict regulation in
682 the Western Desert is the nazaala, i.e., "the act of taking
*613 refuge." If a killing is committed, the killer immediately
●778 seeks protection by going to the residence of a neutral third
party. The third party, who may or may not be an 'agila', and
his lineage give protection to the whole tertiary segment of
the killer. This may involve the actual relocation of the
killer's bait to the residence of the protecting group for

578 the period of one year. During the period of sanctuary, it
682 is hoped that two things will happen: that the killed man's
*613 group will be placated and agree to compensation rather than
778 retaliation as a means of conflict regulation; and, that over
this period of one year the killer's family will pay the
diyya.

The practice of nazaala is one means of differentiating between internal and external political relations. Killing between tertiary groups of the same secondary lineage would never be mediated by the nazaala, rather, compensation would immediately be paid and the matter settled--or at least never again mentioned. The Bedouins believe that killings at any level should be forgotten for fear that hostile feelings, or even feuding, will re-emerge. This excerpt from my field notes shows this.

Hajj Sabr asked if I would take him in the jeep to Ras Abu Laha. As we passed Umm al-Rakham, the territory of 'Ailit Amarik (Marabtiin affiliated with 'Ali Abyad) west of al-Qasr, he told me about a feud which took place there five years ago. The quarrel began, as most do, over the rights to a piece of land: 'Ailit Amarik and a lineage of the Qinaishat tribe both laid claim to a strip of land between their territories. One man from the Qinaishat was killed, and, in revenge, the Qinaishat killed three men and wounded four from 'Ait Amarik. The government intervened to stop the killing. It became settled when the 'awaagil met at the zawiya of Umm al-Rakham. They ate together and resumed brotherly relations. Since Hajj Sabr was one of the third parties involved in this settlement, I asked him if I might read his copy of the document on this case. He replied: "Shame, shame! If you begin to ask about this case, it may start all over again. There are still bad feelings between the two tribes."

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The nazaala as a regulatory mechanism functions only between secondary segments. This indicates that blood-revenge as a negative sanction is operative only in the external system of political relations. Political relations at this level, where the feeling of corporateness is relatively lacking, are in delicate balance. Therefore, once conflict is successfully mediated and the injury redressed, it is best forgotten, for it is unlikely that either party feels their rights have been completely restored.

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Sanctions against personal injury, besides killing, are dealt out in terms of fines, the fines being figured as proportions of the diyya. Every part of the body has a price on it: the Bedouins say, "Banu Adam kill-i-filvus" ("The sons of Adam are all money"). A proportion of the diyya is due for injury to any of the following parts of the body: the beard, hair on the head and the nape of the neck, and eye-lashes; wounds to any part of the body; fractures and dislocations of bones; the tongue and the teeth; the testicles and the breasts; and the loss of mind. Bodily injuries are

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evaluated by a considered expert, the nathaara ("the keen-eyed one"). If the services of a nathaara become necessary in al-Qasr, the barber in Marsa Matruh (the same person who performs most of the Bedouins' circumcisions) fills the role.

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But the Bedouins say, "Now that we are educated we are able to make our own evaluations."

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[114] what happened; some of them are my translations of legal documents which informants permitted me to see; a few of the cases happened while I was in the field and represent my reporting of what happened. I have arbitrarily divided the cases into those involving personal injury and those concerning property rights. In each case, I indicate at which level of the authority structure the conflict and settlement has taken place.

Legal Cases Pertaining to Personal Injury

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Two cases of killing have been discussed previously.

Below are a number of cases dealing with personal injury which occurred in the external political system at the various levels of segmentation. The first three cases involve conflict between secondary lineage segments of the 'Aishaibat tribe; the next two cases take place at the primary and sub-tribal levels, but note that secondary segments are the actual functioning units involved; the final case, an unusual one, deals with conflict with "foreigners" at the tribal level. Note that the

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'agila as a corporate representative is active in these cases.

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The third case presented below is a translation of an actual document showing how the nazaala (discussed above) functions as a formal mechanism of conflict regulation.

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578 be chosen by Shaikh Khalid Za'aluk, the first party. The text
685 of the oath which Khalid Idris will swear is: "By the truth
691 of the owner of this tomb (maqam), and this book of God, I
619 swear that you (i.e. the 'Ailit Sulwatiyya represented by
695 [539] Shaikh Khalid Za'aluk) have neither work of hand nor a
grandfather's stake in this well." If any of the oath-takers
are missing on the day of the oath, the well will be owned
Khalid Za'aluk. And if they swear the oath, the well will be
owned by 'Ailit Ma'fas.

The date of the oath will be the first Friday of month nine,
• [778] 1964. The oath will be taken at the shrine of Sidi 'Awam, and
the swearing will deal with the well only. For the land which
is west of the well belongs to Khalid Za'aluk and his family,
and the land to the east of the well belongs to Khalid Idris
and his family. And the water which is west of the well
belongs to Khalid Za'aluk. The two parties agreed to this.
(Each party, and five witnesses, i.e. rajal khair, for each
party, signed the document.)

423 Date: 30 July 1964. I, Khalid Za'aluk, have decided to cancel
619 the oath which was supposed to have been sworn on 9 September
578 1964 at the shrine of Sidi Awam. Khalid Idris and the oath-
691 takers were present and were stopped from taking the oath.
[645] And the well named al-Halima which was the cause of the quarrel

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556 tional symbol of wealth. A comparison of wealth between the "status group" and "other members" of al-Qasr, and the picture of stratification which emerges, are shown on Table 6.

TABLE 6

COMPARATIVE DATA ON SOCIO-ECONOMIC
STRATIFICATION IN AL-QASR¹

Average Per Person	Status Group	Others
OLIVE - trees	661	86
SHEEP - head	402	30
LAND - acres	91	5

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*613 One most important way of accruing "status honor" in al-Qasr is by acting the part of the third party in conflict situations. The role of the third party represents an effective and acceptable way of bypassing formal litigation through the office of 'aqila. For instance, by mediating through the process of nazaala, the third party prevents feuds.

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[128] ¹This data is both approximate and partial. Some data are excellent and completely reliable, others are not so dependable. Factors which could conceivably change the picture here presented would be a count of land and animals outside al-Qasr which would be extremely difficult to obtain. Also, some land is not in the name of the owner but in the names of relatives. Of all the data, land data is the most unreliable. Nevertheless, the addition of new data, I feel, would only serve to substantiate the picture of socio-economic stratification shown here.

554 of the Bedouin attitude, or lack of it, toward religion.
792 Since the time of Muhammad, the Bedouins have been considered
771 notoriously bad Muslims. Today, the Bedouins tend to joke
about their lack of zeal, and often point out that "holy
619 men" are not to be trusted.² This is seen in Sa'adi behavior
771 toward the Marabtin tribes who are their vassals. Theoretically,
792 the Marabtin who trace descent to the Prophet and might be
554 considered "sacred Tribes" should be respected by the "secular"
• [778] Sa'adi tribes. But the Sa'adi of al-Qasr tend to deride the
Marabit. For instance, the "holy man" of al-Qasr, 'Amm Salih,
554 is a Marabit and well-known for his ability to successfully
792 mediate in conflict situations. But one informant, pointing
627 out this gift which 'Amm Salih possesses, said: "Amm Salih
619 is a good man, he is not a Marabit." But 'Amm Salih identifies
himself as a "rajal saalih" and a "Marabit"; he sees no role
conflict here.

771 The Bedouins also joke about the manner in which they
[522] practice the "pillars of Islam." Especially, they make light
of the fact that they are irregular in mosque attendance.

They say, with a slight smile, "we pray in the desert." A
[124] common way for an interview to end was by an informant rising
and saying: "Now I must wash for prayers." This happened

[184] ²Professor Abou-Zeid also notes this trait in his
study of the Bedouin near Sallum, on the Libyan border
(1966:248).

771 at any time of the day! As one Bedouin put it: "According to the idea of goodness (salih), we are not good. This is because we do not pray, we are part-timers in prayer."

554 A good rajal saalih is considered by the Bedouin to
792 have a special "blessing" (baraka), a concept somewhat
• 798 equivalent to that of mana. Someone such as 'Amm Salih is thought to have baraka, and this type of power naturally increases his influence and enhances his status. The following [124] informant's account brings this out and shows something of the magico-religious element at work in Bedouin power relations.

[539] Hajj 'Ali does not believe in magic but he respects the "holy man" like anyone else. He owns a field from which are taken stones for building houses. One day he saw some men taking stones from this field. They were digging near a well so that the well would not be able to hold water after they had finished. Hajj 'Ali told the men to stop digging. One man answered: "I am cutting these stones for the Jaraira family (the family of 'Amm Salih), and only a few more and we will be finished." Hajj 'Ali replied: "For the Jaraira as for anyone else, we don't favor anyone, so stop the work now." Then Hajj 'Ali went home, never thinking that they would cause any trouble for him, and he was afraid of no harm. He slept and he had a dream. [787] In the dream he saw three of the Jaraira family, all of whom were dead and whom he had known in life. In the dream they only watched him and spoke no words. In the morning Hajj 'Ali went to the co-operative society's office and there he met 'Amm Salih. He said to him: "'Amm Salih, I want to tell you something." Then he related the whole story to him, and said: "I had no fear that you would do me any harm. But last night I saw your relatives in my dream; I had not even thought of them yesterday, so they are not the cause of the dream. (The Bedouins believe that dreams reflect, and are connected with, what you saw or did during the day). So come and take all of the stones that you want, even if you are going to build a palace."

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* 613 at this lineage level must bear collective responsibility in
602 matters of compensation and blood-revenge. This principle,
571 as we have seen, is extended until the whole 'aiela is in-
682 cluded in a symbolic expression of corporate group solidarity.
In order for this expression to persist, of course, the
mechanism, or ideology, of blood-revenge must be maintained.

[124] All of my informants, though they disagreed over the details
of revenge, insisted that it was the inviolable right of the
156 Arabs. But Hajj 'Ali took exception to the practice of blood-
159 revenge for a number of reasons. He said:

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• [178] The world changes. Before it was only the 'awaiyid
Awlad 'Ali and the Border Guards which kept order.
The government now enters into the matter of killings.
Personally, I do not agree with the custom and the
way it operates. In the case of killing, for instance,
someone who is not worth anything, and has no brains,
kills one from another tribe. Then the tribe of the
killer asks for the nazaala, and a third party becomes
involved. The third party agrees to guard the killer's
bait for twelve months and the business of all those
involved must stop. A member of the third party's
family must accompany each member of the killer's tribe.
But even after the twelve months one must live in fear
at his own home, for after the twelve months the tribe
of the deceased will try to kill the best man in the
killer's tribe. How many good ones do we have in one
tribe? I have heard that in Algeria, Morocco, and
Tunisia the deceased man's family has the right to kill
the killer only . . . (I then commented that perhaps
blood-revenge functions to discourage killing in the
desert.) But there are unbalanced people who actually
commit murder just to tease their tribe: they have
nothing to fear because no one is interested in killing
them in retaliation.

In challenging the Arabs' traditional right to blood-
revenge, Hajj 'Ali--besides questioning a structural basis of

619 groups were expected to help. For these reasons the Sa'adi tribes com-
619 peted and even fought among themselves for the newcomers Murabiteen
721 groups which continued to migrate into the area, escaping the strong
dominance of the Cyrenaica Bedouins..Many of the major tribal wars which
occurred in the area before the turn of the century had as their major
cause the competition over the Murabiteen.

619 As a vassal group the Murabiteen tribes are kept in an inferior
• 778 position. This inferiority has certain manifestation, the most obvious
184 of which is the deprivation of the Murabiteen of the right of "nazala"
682 or refuge. When a person is killed the killer and his kin unit seek re-
778 fuge at a neutral tribal segment, and for a period of twelve months they
613 are safe from the revenge of the victim's kin group. The victim's family
[671] cannot follow them to the refuge place, for to do this is to violate one
of the basic principles of Awlad Ali law. The philosophy behind the rule
of "nazala" is to give time for "the blood to cool off" as one of the in-
formants described it. It also gives the host group a chance to start
immediate negotiations with the victim's group to settle permanently the
dispute. As soon as the murderer's group takes refuge, which is done
either by moving along with their tents and flocks and settling in the
locality of the host group or symbolically by having the head of the
host group send one of his sons or male relatives to pitch his tent in
the locality of the murderer's group, the head of the host group contacts
the victim's group, informs them that he has been chosed by the murderer's
group in accordance with the right of nazala, and asks for their per-
mission to grant his protection to the murderer's group. To ask for the
permission of the victim's group is a matter of formality since, by custom,
they cannot refuse to grant this permission except on one single ground:

682 if the host group is genealogically close enough to the murderer's group
778 as to be themselves part of the vengeance group. As soon as the per-
613 mission is granted the head of the host group starts negotiations on be-
half of the murderer. Since the basic reason for the nazala is to avoid
the direct confrontation between the two opposing groups, the first task
of the negotiations is to define which places and markets each group can
go to during the year of the nazala. Once this has been agreed upon,
the difficult task of settling the dispute begins. The success or fail-
ure of the negotiations depends on the skill of the negotiator and the
weight his tribal segment has in the area. This makes it of extreme im-
portance for the murderer to select the tribal segment which can affect
such a settlement. In cases where the host group is not particularly
powerful, the victim's group pretends to agree to a settlement in order
to have the murderer and his group leave the locality of the host group
and then takes revenge by killing the murderer. This cannot happen when
the host group is powerful, since such an action would automatically make
the host group enemies of the victim's group.

619 With very few exceptions which will be dealt with later, the right
184 to offer refuge is limited to the Sa'adi tribes. No Murabiteen tribe can
778 grant refuge to a murderer, although they themselves can seek refuge at a
682 Sa'adi tribal segment if one of them is involved in murder.

619 Another less conspicuous manifestation of the inferior position of
184 the Murabiteen relative to the Sa'adi is the fact that the bloodmoney
[682] for the Murabit is two-thirds that for the Sa'adi man. Also, until very
[582] recently, marriage of a Sa'adi to a member of the Murabiteen tribes was
considered by the Sa'adi as a very poor choice and was discouraged.

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582 In recent years this has changed, however. The increased importance of wealth in the recently introduced money economy relaxed the endogamous tendency that was characteristic of the Sa'adi tribes.

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184 In discussing the position of the Murabiteen tribes it is worth noting that not all the Murabiteen tribes in the area occupy the same position. Some enjoy relatively higher positions than the others. Actually, there are two kinds of Murabiteen in the area: Mustaqillen (independent Murabiteen); and the dependent Murabiteen. The latter are further subdivided into Murabiteen bil-baraka (with the blessing); and Murabiteen bil-sadaqa (with the tribute). The only independent Murabiteen in the area is the Gemei'at tribe. These are the original settlers of the area. Because of their help to Awlad Ali against the Hanadi, the latter were defeated and Awlad Ali were able to occupy the Western Desert. [173] For their part the Gemei'at tribe was granted its independence by Awlad Ali and were given one-third of the total area as their homeland (watan).

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582 In theory, the Gemei'at tribe occupies the same position and has the same rights as the Sa'adi tribes, including the right to offer their protection which is denied to all other client groups. In practice, however, this seems to be of no practical value. None of my informants could remember a single case in which a murderer has taken refuge at a segment of the Gemei'at tribe. The importance of the nazala is not merely to be safe from the pursuit of the victim's group but rather to provide the mediators who undertake the crucial task of negotiation on behalf of the murderer and his group. It is the ability to settle the dispute on a permanent basis that offers the actual long-lasting protection, even after the time of the nazala expires. To be successful in his pursuit,

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619 the negotiator has to have behind him the full weight of his tribal se-
 778 gment. Since the origin of the Gemei'at tribe as a Murabiteen tribe is
 184 well known, any negotiator has to rely almost entirely upon his own skill
 682 to affect any settlement; even if he is able to affect such a settlement,
 627 there is no guarantee that it will be permanent.
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619 The Murabit~~een~~ bil-baraka and Murabiteen bil-sadaqa occupy the same
 792 position as vassal groups. The only difference between the two is that
 the first, the religious men, are much more respected than the latter.
 They are feared by the other tribes because of the belief that they have
 direct contact with the religious and spiritual world and can harm those
 who dare to offend them in one way or another. Because of this factor
 [627] and of their neutral position with regard to the rest of the tribes, they
 [628] play an important role in mediation and dispute settlement.

619 The origin of inferiority of the Murabiteen tribes in general is
 184 hard to account for. Kenneth (1925) believes that hundreds of years ago
 174 the Murabiteen were essentially the holymen. They learned to read and
 792 write the Qoraan and grouped themselves around the "zawias" which were
 the centers of learning and religion. While indulging in their religious
 practices their flocks are grazed miles away in the open desert under the
 charge of the Sa'adi shepherds, who originally were the poor paid workers
 of the Murabiteen. These shepherds, living out in the open, were busy
 fighting away the raiders attempting to steal their flocks. As time
 passed the Sa'adi shepherds became not only tough fighters but also wealthy.
 This latter end was achieved partly as a result of successful raids on
 neighboring tribes. Later when the Sa'adi planned a large raid, they en-
 trusted their flocks to the Murabiteen, who by that time had become depen-
 dent upon the Sa'adi for their protection from the raids of other tribes.

685 The Geneishat selected the tomb of the saint where the oath was to
629 be administered. According to the customary law of Awlad Ali, the plain-
778 tiff is the one to decide which saint is to be sought for the taking of
695 the oath by the defendant. Each saint has his own reputation and some
[671] are said to be more effective in certain kinds of disputes. The saint
[776] selected in this case was Sidi Dmain. Sidi Dmain's tomb is in the
Beheira province some 60 miles east of the area of Burg el-Arab. He is
[732] known to cause the blindness of those who dare to swear falsely by him,
[784] and at least four cases of blindness in the area have been attributed to
[671] false oaths at Sidi Dmain. Also according to the law, it is the plain-
tiff who selects the persons from the defendant's kin unit who are to
685 support him in the oath. Following this rule, the Geneishat, with the
629 help of Hadi, selected the fourteen men from bait Asabel to swear with
695 Rabbu. The number of men that were required in this case was considered
613 very conservative. The usual practice in estimating the number of sup-
[803] porters in any case is done by establishing the value of the damage or
compensation and dividing it by ten. The result is the number of men
needed to give the oath. If there were not enough adult males in a given
kinship unit to fulfill the number needed, some or all the men would
have to be sworn twice or three times and each time a person takes the
oath he is considered as a separate person until the number needed is met.

Following this rule, and since the value of the property confiscated
in the above case was over three thousand pounds, 300 persons should have
been sworn in support of Rabbu. Since this would have complicated the
matter greatly, it was agreed that fifteen men were enough. Taleb
gave the justification for limiting the number to 15 that trade and, as

685 such, deviates from the normal pattern of cases dealt with by the cus-
629 tomary law in the conventional way. The men selected by the Geneishat
695 included, in addition to Rabbu and his father Hakim, Shei'eb and his
613 three brothers, Hakim's cousin Samsoun and his four brothers and Hakim's
uncle Sheikh Qudura and his sons. The date of the oath was set for June
tenth. Two days before, the two parties involved in the dispute invited
a number of the important people of other tribal segments in the area to
be witnesses to the oath. All involved started to travel to the tomb of
[492] Sidi Dmain, some on donkeys, others by bus or train. At six o'clock on
[494] the morning of the oath everybody gathered in the courtyard outside the
[497] tomb of the saint. The granddaughter of the saint works as a mediator
[778] between the spirit of her grandfather and his followers announced that
[787] the saint was ready for the oath and everybody went inside preparing for
[796] the oath. Before the oath was taken the Geneishat asked Hakim if his son
and the fourteen men they had chosen were present and Hakim said they
were. Since the Geneishat were from a different tribal segment and
lived outside the area, they had no personal knowledge of most of the
men who were to take the oath. Knowing the reputation of Hakim they
[212] asked the men to present their identification cards to check them against
[747] the list they had. At that time Hakim said that some of the men didn't
have identification cards because they had not applied for aid from the
World Food Program. Then the Geneishat demanded that those without cards
should be identified by members of other tribal segments who had come as
witnesses. Hakim refused and then admitted that one of the men was ab-
sent and that he had put another in place of him. But when the Geneishat
learned that the one to be absent was Sheikh Qudura, they insisted that

622 His main function is to manage the affairs of the village, apprehend
554 criminals, report and register births and deaths, collect taxes and
represent the government in all matters involving the relationship be-
tween the government and his village. Because of his position as the
[661] representative of the government, he usually enjoys a considerable
amount of power which, over the years, many omdas have used it to obtain
personal benefits.

361 In 1958 the committee appointed for the examination of the possi-
631 bility of applying the system to Awlad Ali noticed that villages in the
sense of a compact settlement similar to that existing in the rural area
simply do not exist in the Western Desert region. There are a few
settled communities in the area but they are scattered homes or a few
stores. These communities have no identifiable boundaries or adminis-
631 trative existence. The area as a whole is divided into ten adminis-
634 trative districts, each having a police station. These districts cor-
625 respond to the old Senusia Zawyas which played an important role in
795 maintaining order in the era until the First World War. Until that time
795 the area was divided into fourteen zones each of which was under the
jurisdiction of one of the zawyas. The zawyas were mainly religious
175 centers, or shrines, inhabited and directed by a member of the Senusi
[793] order of Cyrenaica. The role of the head of the zawya was to teach the
[794] Qoraan and spread the teachings of the Senusi order. One of the ways
the zawyas attracted followers was through distribution of food and
clothing to those who joined it. The zawyas also provided places of
[798] refuge for those who needed protection since no one could force his way
into the sacred zawyas. Because of their religious position which put

581 are necessary for the validation of the marriage contract. Modern
585 legal systems, which took as their basis the Islamic law of marriage
671 and the family further required the registration of the marriage con-
675 tract for the marriage to be legal.

584 The request and necessary response forming the marriage are sup-
585 posed to be carried on by the parties involved. However, if either the
429 groom or the bride is not of age, or is mentally unqualified, the trans-
593 action is carried on by his or her guardian, or "wakil." The wakil is
the father, unless he is dead or an invalid, in which case the brothers
[604] become the wakils. If the person has no brothers, then the uncles be-
[184] come the wakil in the order stated. According to certain Sunni sects
in Islam, a woman marrying for the first time is always represented by
her wakil, even if she is of age. The assumption is that a woman who
has never been married does not have the experience that enables her to
enter into any kind of legally binding relationship such as marriage.

585 * Following the original Islamic idea, marriage among Awlad Ali is
675 an oral agreement between the groom or his father and the guardian
593 (wakil) of the bride-to-be (her father, if alive, or her closest male
429 kin in the following order: her brothers, her uncles, her grandfather).
[604]

585 A religious man is sometimes asked to perform the marriage, although it
792 is not required. Some persons might invite a member of the Murabiteen
[619] tribe or holy men to witness the marriage on the basis that his presence
[718] gives "baraka," or blessing, to the marriage. Before the application of
585 the State legal system to the area, marriage contracts were not regis-
656 tered. In recent years, however, and with the increased mobility of
197 the tribal populations, more and more marriages are being registered in
[675] the administrative districts. Still, according to the unofficial estimates,
[634]

586 the man she chooses. She informs him before she enters his house that
562 she is the wife of so and so and the daughter of so and so and that she
574 is throwing herself on him to protect her from her husband with whom
she no longer wishes to live. Like the right of refuge, the man cannot
• [778] refuse to let her in; and from this moment until her dispute with her
husband is resolved, she is considered as his house guest and is en-
titled to all the hospitality a guest receives. If he refuses to ex-
[627] tend that hospitality or refuses to take her in, she can ask for a mi'ad
[281] and is entitled to kabara from him. There has been no reported incidents
in which a man refused that right to a woman. As soon as she settles
down in the host's house, the latter takes immediate measures to find
the husband and to convince him to let his wife go. In doing this, the
man uses all the power of persuasion. The man selected for this purpose
586 is usually a respected man who can put pressure upon the husband. Some-
562 times he has to bribe the husband to release the wife, paying from his
574 own money. The man has to have money, not only to be able to support
554 the wife during her stay in his house and to bribe the husband, but also
[550] because in certain instances he has to pay the husband the mahr that the
father of the wife had taken in order to free her. The next step after
getting the agreement of the husband to divorce his wife is to contact
the father of the wife or her guardian and convince him to pay the mahr
to the husband. If the father does not agree, or if he is financially
unable to do so, the man on whom the woman has thrown herself is supposed
to pay from his own money. In cases where the woman left the husband to
be married to another man with whom she had had a relationship, the re-
spected man tries to have the future husband pay the present husband the
mahr he is supposed to pay the woman after she is divorced from her

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682 feet after that and left." It seems that later the wound got in-
672 fected. Six months after the incident, Selouma was taken to the
[578] hospital with an infected wound, and three days later he died from
that infection. Selouma's son, Ali, demanded that Muftah pay a
full bloodmoney (L.E. 400) for the death of his father, since the
death was directly caused by the wound inflicted by Muftah. Muftah
denied the charges and claimed that the infected wound which caused
the death of Selouma was not the one inflicted by the stone. Media-
(83
682 tions continued for some time, and when no agreement was achieved,
672 the aqilas of the two baits to which the parties belonged declared
675 that the decision should be made by the oath which Muftah had to
613 take if he insisted on his claims that the wound was not caused by
his action. Since the case involved the life of a man, Muftah had
to be supported in his oath by fifty-five adult male members of
his 'amar, or 'eila. In accordance with the Daraieb, the selection
[671]
[778] was done by members of Selouma's Bait who also selected the tomb of
the saint where the oath would be undertaken. On the date the oath
was to be taken, the disputing parties, as well as all the notables
of friendly tribal segments who were invited to witness the oath,
went to the tomb of the saint. As they started with the procedures,
[784] two of Muftah's cousins who were to support him in the oath and his
uncle refused to swear on the grounds that they were not sure that
Muftah was telling the truth and therefore could not subject them-
selves to the supernatural hazards of taking a false oath. Attempts
by other members who were to support Muftah were made to force the
three men to swear, since their refusal meant that the bloodmoney

682 In practice, Awlad Ali do look at actual circumstances to assess
692 the intention of the offender. Although compensation is always required, the readiness of the victim's kin group to accept a financial settlement and the final amount to be paid in a given situation is affected by the presence or absence of an intention on behalf of the offender. In assessing the actual intention of the offender in each case, the mediators rely on the circumstances of the crime as well as on the past history of the relationships between the offender and the victim. Although this actual intention of the offender does not change the payment of bloodmoney, the deceased's kin are more agreeable to the acceptance of the financial settlement if the killing is unintentional than if it is intentional and the possibility of revenge is much less imminent. Unintentional killing, regardless of the weapon used never results in blood feuds. The possibility, on the other hand, is much greater in the cases where the circumstances of the offense indicate an intention on the part of the killer to take the life of the victim. It is for this reason that the right of hazala, or refuge, discussed in an earlier chapter, is resorted to only in the case of intentional killing. Of all the cases described in the chapter only in the case of the trespasser did the killers' kin group seek refuge by moving to another area where they were protected until the dispute was solved by another neutral tribal segment. It is important to note that killing in the above case was not done by a lethal weapon but by sticks, and as such was defined by the tribal law as "unintentional" as far as the formal amount of compensation required was concerned. Not all cases where the intention of the offender to kill the victim is clear carried with it the threat of revenge. The tribal law takes into consideration certain mitigating circumstances, such as the role of the victim in initiating the act of the offender.

8 ORIGIN AND EXPANSION OF THE SANUSIYA

*795 The desire to establish in North Africa conditions in which
793 Muslims might live by their own laws and under their own
798 government, as they did in Arabia under the first four Caliphs,
177 led the Grand Sanusi and his successors to oppose the Turkish
way of life and the influences and innovations of Western
Christendom, but their intransigence in these matters did not
imply intolerance, far less aggressiveness. Though some
writers have made assertions to the contrary, the Sanusi have
never shown themselves more hostile than other Muslims to
Christians and Jews, and the Grand Sanusi and Sayyid al-
Mahdi scrupulously avoided all political entanglements which
might bring them into unfriendly relations with neighbouring
States and the European Powers. The Brothers of the Order
*795 were discouraged from discussing political questions. Nor were
793 the Sanusi intolerant towards fellow Muslims who differed from
798 them. Shaikh Muhammed 'Uthman records of Sayyid al-Mahdi
that 'the persons he dislikes the most are those who speak ill
of Muslims'.¹ The leaders of the Sanusiya have always tolerated
other and rival Orders, even when they have disapproved of
their rites. The Grand Sanusi had himself been a member of a
succession of Orders before he started his own and he allowed,
as his successors have done, members of other Orders to belong
to the Sanusiya at the same time.

*795 The leaders of the Order have also been tolerant towards the
792 cult of saints, unlike the iconoclastic Wahhabi, who have
798 destroyed even the tombs of those nearest to the Prophet him-
796 self. The view held by the doctors of orthodox Islam is that,
798 though intercession through a saint is unlawful and the only
mention of him during prayers at his tomb should be to ask the
mercy of God on his soul, it is permissible to show respect to his
tomb and his memory. The heads of the Sanusiya have, how-
ever, always tolerated among their Bedouin followers a regard
for holy men and their tombs which goes beyond mere respect.
It is unlikely that they felt any repugnance to the cult, because
they counted among their forbears several saints and were
themselves brought up in North Africa where the cult of saints
is widespread and very near to the hearts of the common people;
and they could not have remonstrated with the Bedouin for
believing that holy men and their tombs are sources of *baraka*,

¹ Op. cit., p. 121.

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divine blessing, since it was because the Bedouin believed the Sanusi family had the same virtue that they accepted their leadership.

The resemblance often alleged between the Sanusi and the Wahhabi movements, on the grounds of like puritanism, literalism, and fanaticism, cannot be substantiated. It is obvious that there must be resemblances between new religious movements: they usually claim to be a return to primitive faith and morals and they are generally missionary and enthusiastic. There is no great significance in such common characteristics of the two movements. Nor is there any reason to suppose that the Grand Sanusi was directly influenced by Wahhabi propaganda. A more significant comparison between the two might be made by tracing their developments from religious into political movements. Both started as religious revivals among backward peoples, chiefly Bedouin, the Wahhabi movement in the Nadj in the eighteenth century and the Sanusi movement first in the Hijaz and then in Cyrenaica in the middle of the nineteenth century; the *Ikhwan* organizations of the two movements have much in common; and both ended in the formation of Amirates, or small Islamic States.

Both movements have created States, the Wahhabi in Arabia and the Sanusi in Cyrenaica, based explicitly on religious particularism. In doing so they have only done what any movement of the kind is bound to do in a barbarous country if it is to continue to exist, namely, to create an administrative system which would ensure a measure of peace, security, justice, and economic stability. A religious organization cannot exist apart from a polity of a wider kind. But they did not create the sentiment of community which made the growth of governmental functions and the emergence of a State possible.

Religious divisions in Islam have commonly been the expression of a sense of social and cultural exclusiveness. The support given to the 'Alids in Persia and Arabia, to the Umayyads in Africa and Spain, to the Fatimids in Egypt, to the Kharijites by the Berbers in North Africa, and the adoption of extreme Shi'ite doctrines by the mountaineers of Syria and by the Kurds, and of Isma'ili teachings in parts of India, were all reactions against foreign domination as much as revolts against orthodoxy. The religious deviation was the expression of the intense desire

10 ORIGIN AND EXPANSION OF THE SANUSIYA

*795 of a people to live according to their own traditions and institu-
182 tions. To-day this desire is expressed in the political language
177 of nationalism. In the past it was expressed in religious move-
171 ments. Arab nationalism is not a new phenomenon. Only its
[668] dress is new.

*795 As will be seen in the chapters which follow, conditions in
182 Cyrenaica were particularly favourable to the growth of a
politico-religious movement such as the Sanusiya became. It
was cut off by deserts from neighbouring countries, it had a
homogeneous population, it had a tribal system which em-
braced common traditions and a strong feeling of community
of blood, the country was not dominated by the towns, and the
Turkish administration exercised very little control over the
interior. It was, as will be seen, the tribal system of the Bedouin
which furnished the Order with its political foundations just as
it was the tribesmen of the country whose hardness and courage
enabled it to stand up to the succession of defeats it had to
endure.

*795 The reasons for the political success of the Sanusiya Order in
793 Cyrenaica will appear in the course of this account, and here I
182 wish to draw attention to one of them only. It has been said
[792] that its rites and teachings were, like the Bedouin character,
[798] austere without being fanatical, and that it tolerated the cult
of saints to which the Bedouin were accustomed, the Grand
Sanusi becoming, in fact, a kind of national saint; but it must
be added that the acceptability of its teachings and the fact
that the Grand Sanusi could at once be placed by the Bedouin
in the familiar category of *Marabtin*, holy men coming to
preach and settle in Cyrenaica from the west, cannot alone
account for the remarkable success of the Sanusiya movement.
The Bedouin of Cyrenaica had heard similar teachings before
from similar teachers and had paid them the same degree
of attention as they paid to the Grand Sanusi, but these
earlier missionaries won only a personal and local following for
themselves and their descendants, whereas the Grand Sanusi
established himself and his family as leaders of a national
movement, a position they have now held for three generations.

[792] Leaving aside the remarkable personality of the Grand Sanusi
[798] and without here discussing whether the time at which he
taught was particularly favourable to the growth of the move-

ORIGIN AND EXPANSION OF THE SANUSIYA II

ment to which his teachings led, it may be said that the great difference between the Grand Sanusi and the earlier holy men whose tombs are homely landmarks all over Cyrenaica was that, while they were, all of them, in the eyes of the Bedouin, Marabouts, the Grand Sanusi was also the head of an Order which gave to him and his successors an organization. Moreover, unlike the Heads of most Islamic Orders, which have rapidly disintegrated into autonomous segments without contact and common direction, they have been able to maintain this organization intact and keep control of it. This they were able to do by co-ordinating the lodges of the Order to the tribal structure.

III

The more recent Islamic Orders are to be found principally in North and West Africa. The Sanusiya is one of the most recent of them. Its founder was an Algerian scholar, al-Sayyid Muhammad bin 'Ali al-Sanusi al-Khattabi al-Idrisi al-Hasani, a very remarkable man, mystic, missionary, and Marabout. The Sayyid Muhammad bin 'Ali al-Sanusi is usually spoken of in Cyrenaica as *al-Sanusi al-Kabir*, the Grand Sanusi, and I generally refer to him thus in this book.

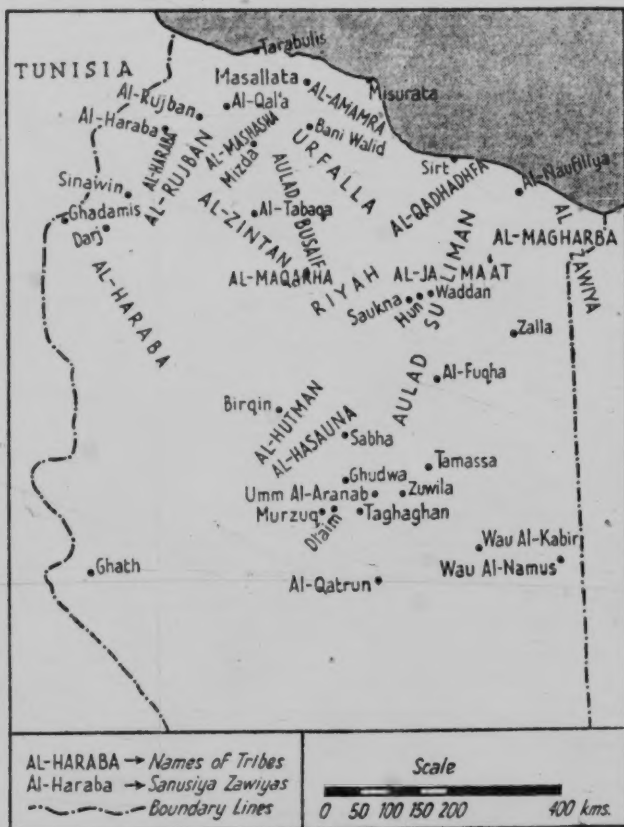
The Grand Sanusi was born of a distinguished family of Sharifs at a village near Mustaghanim in Algeria about 1787. Early in life he became noted for his intelligence, piety, and profound learning, considered fitting ornaments to his noble birth. He studied first at Mustaghanim, then at Mazun, and later at the famous mosque school at Fez in Morocco, where he learnt theology, jurisprudence, exegesis of the Koran, and the other usual subjects of a Muslim student of the time. There he seems to have developed an interest in mysticism, having come under the influence of the Moroccan Order of the Tijaniya Darwishes. He left Fez when in the early thirties in order to make the pilgrimage to Mecca, though a Turkish biographer says that one of his reasons for leaving Morocco was to avoid possible unpleasantness with the authorities, who were alarmed lest his propaganda for the greater unity of Islam, his life's aim, might have political consequences.¹ They had small cause for alarm as his efforts seem to have made little impression on the

¹ Salim bin 'Amir, *Majallat 'Umar al-Mukhtar*, No. II, 1943-4, p. 2.

THE BEDOUIN OF CYRENAICA

619 spond different social statuses. Some are classed as *Marabtin*
 619 *bil baraka*, 'client tribes with the blessing' or *Marabtin al-Fatha*,
 778 'client tribes of the prayer', and they often claim to be Sharifs.
 778 These 'sacred' tribes, such as the Aulad al-Shaikh and most of

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The Chief Sanusi Bedouin Tribes of Tripolitania.

619 the Masamir and Farjan, live among the *Sa'adi* as equals in
 778 virtue of the prestige they derive from their descent, or sup-
 778 posed descent, from saints, though the free tribes do not regard
 [173] them as quite like themselves. Their ancestors are almost
 invariably believed to have come from the west, Morocco,
 Algeria, Tunisia, or Tripolitania. This move of pious men to

THE BEDOUIN OF CYRENAICA

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the east began in the middle of the thirteenth century and has lasted to the present day. It is intimately bound up with the pilgrimage to the sacred towns of Islam. Round these pious men and round their tombs gathered for sanctuary the simple and oppressed, and from these and from the children of the holy men have sprung the *Marabtin bil baraka* tribes. The other client tribes have no sacred associations and are known as *Marabtin al-sadqan* because they pay *sadaqa*, a fee, to a free tribe for protection and for the privilege of using the earth and water. Some small broken-up fragments of this category on the plateau, such as the 'Awwama, Alauna, Hasanna, and some of the Qat'an and Sa'it, even to-day have a very inferior social position and are forced to make payments to, and to perform services for, the free tribes among whom they live. Other tribes of this second category live, as already mentioned, on territory which is to all intents and purposes their own and have long since ceased to pay a fee. This is especially the case to the east, in 'Abaidat tribal territory, where such client tribes as the Minifa, Qat'an, Taraki, and Huta live with independent status. In the west also the Fawakhir and Zuwaya are too powerful and warlike to accept overlordship. Also, the more nomadic groups in Cyrenaica are mostly client tribes and, like all nomads, resent any control or authority. Whatever the free tribes may say about them, they regard themselves as independent.

The provenance of the *Sa'adi* tribes and of some of the *Marabtin* tribes is shown together with the distribution of the Sanusiya lodges on the map facing page 35, and the approximate numbers of these tribes, and of a few others not shown on the map, are listed below.

<i>Sa'adi</i>		al-Zuwaya	3,700
al-'Abaidat	30,450	al-Shwa'ir	3,400
al-'Awaqir	27,500	al-Fawakhir	3,300
al-Bara'asa	21,000	al-Sa'it	2,900
al-Darsa	18,850	al-Majabra	2,500
al-Magharba	13,000	al-Minifa	2,500
al-'Arafa	9,300	al-Masamir	2,400
al-'Abid	6,850	al-Awajila	2,300
al-Hasa	6,500	Aulad al-Shaikh	1,650
'Ailat Fayid	100	al-'Aqail	1,400
		al-Shahaibat	1,350
		al-Sarahna	1,250
		al-Qabail	1,150
		al-Huta	1,150
<i>Marabtin</i>			
al-Qat'an	5,850		
al-'Awwama	3,800		

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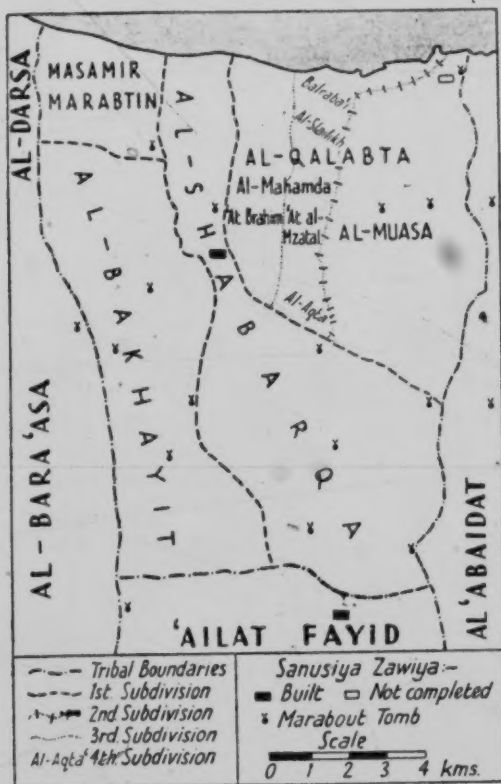
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THE BEDOUIN OF CYRENAICA

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and of the consistency between lineages of a clan and segments of a tribe. In explanation of it a few words must first be said about the terms *qabila*, *'aila*, and *bait*. *Qabila* is the word generally used to denote a tribe or primary tribal division.

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The Divisions of the Hasa Tribe.

'*Ailat* are the lineages into which a clan is divided and hence the sections of a tribe of various sizes in which these lineages are found and after which they take their names. *Biyut* are small lineages, or extended families, with a depth of five or six generations from the present day to their founders. It must be noted, however, that all these terms are relative and are used in a more or less comprehensive sense according to the context.

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of Cyrenaica.¹ The Bedouin remember with gratitude, as I have often heard them declare, the moral and cultural benefits brought to them by the Order. If they have fallen from the low religious and literary standards to which the Sanusiya raised a fraction of them it is due to the virtual extinction of its teaching office during their long struggle with the Italians.

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II

The Bedouin the Grand Sanusi found in Cyrenaica were not only Muslims but also inveterate devotees of saints, the *Marabtin* (sing. *Marabat*) or Marabouts, as they are called in European accounts of North Africa, and the Grand Sanusi was in the long tradition of these holy men. Therefore, although I have touched on the matter in Chapter I, I need not excuse myself for treating it again in its Cyrenaican context, for Bedouin attachment to the Sanusiya springs from their personal devotion to the Grand Sanusi and his family, and not the other way round, and the Grand Sanusi derived his sanctity, and thereby his power, from the fact that he was a Marabout. The Bedouin are familiar with saints and ignorant of Orders. To them the Grand Sanusi was a saint and wonderworker, and a man with *baraka*, an ample measure of God's grace which flowed through him to ordinary folk; but there was nothing extraordinary about him. They knew his kind of old. When he died his tomb became a shrine, the largest and richest in Cyrenaica it is true, but only one among very many, dating from the Companions of the Prophet Muhammad, through the Martyrs who were killed fighting for the faith in Cyrenaica, to the pious and learned men of yesterday and the day before. His successors, by their kinship with him, and in virtue of their spiritual legacy from him, became heirs to his *baraka*; and so, to a lesser degree, have the heirs of the other religious teachers who came to Cyrenaica from the west, who died and were buried there, and whose descendants are the *Marabtin bil baraka* lineages of to-day. The authority the Grand Sanusi had over the Bedouin of Arabia and North Africa can be paralleled by the careers of many holy

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¹ Giuseppe Macaluso, *Turchi, Senussi e Italiani in Libia*, 1930, p. 32; Giglio, op. cit., p. 22; and Arcangelo Ghisleri (quoting Andrea Pedretti), *Tripolitania e Cirenaica dal Mediterraneo al Sahara*, 1912, p. 132.

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771 men in North Africa whose families still retain much wealth and
772 influence. It was this Marabout status of the Grand Sanusi in
773 the eyes of the Bedouin which won him their respect: it was the
776 organization of the Sanusiya Order, an organization the earlier
● 778 Marabouts did not have, which enabled him to turn this respect
into a theocracy.

* 175 There is more than one explanation of the origin of the word
792 'Marabat'. That generally accepted is that it derives from the
619 root RBT, to bind, and hence from 'ribat', a fortified convent,
[192] inhabited by warrior-monks, found on the marches of Islam in
its early days of expansion by arms. The word later became
attached to the tribes which settled in Andalousia under the
leadership of the Saharan tribe of the Sanhaja and was corrupted
into the European 'Almoravides'. After the fall of the Sanhaja
dynasty in the twelfth century part of the *Marabtin* tribes fell
back into central and southern Morocco, whence many in-
dividuals moved eastwards. Some settled in Cyrenaica,
generally on their return from the pilgrimage to Mecca, and
their fanaticism, asceticism, ability to read and write, and thau-
maturgic powers, impressed the simple Bedouin, who accepted
them as holy men and magicians and used them to write charms,
to perform religious rites, and to act as mediators in inter-
tribal disputes. Sometimes, as we have seen, these men
[613] founded lineages which, dwelling under the shadow of their
saintly forbears, became nuclei of social agglomerations which
have developed in course of time into tribal groups, thus taking
the shape of the tribal society in which they lived. The word
[192] 'Marabtin' thus came to mean holy men (and their tombs) and
then, in addition, tribes tracing their descent, or supposed
descent, from these holy men and also, finally, in Cyrenaica,
tribes who are clients of the great *Sa'adi* tribes which own the
earth and water.

778 Some of the better known of the Cyrenaican saints, but by
776 no means all, have gleaming white cupolas, supported by four
792 walls, erected over their tombs, and inside the walls is a *tub*, a
wooden box, over the grave, and this is covered with coloured
cloth on which are inscribed passages from the Koran. Inside
also are often a few pages from sacred books, occasionally a few
small coins given by the local Bedouin, and any property, such
as tents or ploughs, the Bedouin have wished to deposit in a

THE SANUSIYA AND THE TRIBES

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safe place when on seasonal moves. Often a shrine, sometimes the shrine of a very famous saint, is no more than a wall of stones, with perhaps a stick, with pieces of cloth tied to it, erected over the grave, and this is the usual form in the steppe grazing-grounds. There are generally cemeteries around the tombs.

All these shrines are visited by the Bedouin from time to time, when they are passing by or when they have some request to make of the holy man. Many of them are cult centres, an annual ceremony, one of the chief events of the Bedouin year, being held at them; and when they are near the border between tribes, or between tribal sections, this is an occasion for intertribal, or intersectional, gatherings. There is no saint whose tomb is much visited by the Bedouin who has not performed miracles, some of them very remarkable miracles, and there is probably none who has not at some time or other cured the sick or given an heir.

The tombs of these holy men, Sidi this, Sidi that, and Sidi the other, are found in profusion over the whole of inhabited Cyrenaica. The historically best known are those of Sidi Rafa', one of the Companions of the Prophet, near al-Zawiya al-Baida on the plateau, of Sidi 'Abdalla, one of the Prophet's standard-bearers, in the oasis of Aujila, and of the founder of the Sanusiya Order, Sidi Muhammad bin 'Ali al-Sanusi, at Jaghub oasis. The shrines belong to the tribes and tribal sections in whose earth the Marabouts are buried and the Marabouts are looked upon as tribal and sub-tribal patrons. Like the Sanusiya Order, they have become part of tribal life.

I have earlier reproduced Col. De Agostini's map of the Hasa tribe to serve as an example of the territorial distribution of lineages. The same map serves to illustrate the distribution of shrines in a tribal territory. It can be seen from this map, which shows only the best-known Marabout tombs, that all the different sections of the tribe have their shrines, and I would draw attention to an interesting feature of the distribution which I have also noted in other tribal areas: how often these sacred spots are near a tribal boundary, or near the boundary between one tribal section and another. This may not be pure chance, for the Marabouts in their lifetimes were regarded as standing outside the tribal system, to which indeed, being foreigners from the west, they did not belong, and their chief political role was

THE SANUSIYA AND THE TRIBES

• 778 to act as mediators between tribes and between one tribal
619 section and another. Even to-day their tombs are regarded as
772 neutral points, as it were, and are often the place chosen for a
776 meeting between the Shaikhs of one tribe, or tribal section, and
those of an adjacent tribe, or section, when some matter has to
be settled between them. It has sometimes happened also that
when two tribes have disputed the ownership of territory, they
have settled the dispute by allotting it to a Marabout, which
means to his descendants, so that one then finds a *Marabtin*
strip between two *Sa'adi* tribes or tribal sections. One of the
best examples of this is the strip of country owned by the Aulad
al-Shaikh tribe between the 'Awaqir and the 'Abid and 'Arafa
tribal domains. In the same way tribes made gifts of disputed
wells to dead saints. Where a *Marabtin* tribe has grown out of a
Marabout family they will be found living in the area around
their tombs. Thus the Aulad al-Shaikh territory spreads out
from Sidi Mahiyus, part of the Masamir live near Sidi Nuh, the
Mshaitat live around Sidi al-Mshaiti, and the Qat'an live near
Sidi Hashim and Sidi Suliman al-Tair.

792 So, long centuries before the Grand Sanusi began his mission
776 in Cyrenaica, the Bedouin were used to the sight of an '*alim*, a
212 learned man—for anyone who can read and write is a learned
554 man to the Bedouin—coming from the west to heal their
children and beasts, break droughts, write talismans, and teach
them the beliefs and law of Islam. Such a man was also a
muhakkam, one who arbitrated in their disputes and said the
fatiha at their settlements and undertakings to make them binding.
He could arbitrate among them because he was not of
them. He was not like them a tented son of the steppe, though
his descendants may have learned to live as such, but a *Marabat*,
a man who follows religion and not the rains. The Bedouin of
Cyrenaica owe much to these holy men, for, ignorant and
superstitious though they may have been, they taught the
tribesmen to respect learning and religion and kept those twin
lights burning, even if dimly, through centuries. The Bedouin
do not forget them, or to say a prayer for them, when they pass
their tombs; and they have given the freedom of their earth
and water to their descendants. Without these forerunners the
Grand Sanusi could not have planted his Order in the country.
* [182] It is planted in their bones.
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THE SANUSIYA AND THE TRIBES

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Marabouts of the kind I have described were still coming to Cyrenaica from the west up to the time when the Grand Sanusi began his preaching in the country. Two of them whom he found there, already living among the Bedouin, the one on the western and the other on the eastern part of the plateau, teaching them and settling their disputes, became his followers: Sidi Ahmad bin 'Abdalla al-Sakkuri, a late arrival from the west whose descendants became Shaikhs of the zawiya of al-Marj, and Sidi al-Martadi Farkash, of an old *Marabtin* family of Cyrenaica, whose descendants became Shaikhs of the lodges at Umm al-Razam, Bishara, and Martuba. But the great majority of the Grand Sanusi's helpers were men who had come with him from the west, chiefly from Algeria. Other *Ikhwan* families, mostly of the Khattabi lineage, of which the Sanusi family are a branch, came later, also from Algeria, in the time of Sayyid al-Mahdi. To the Bedouin they were all Marabouts and when they had in their lifetimes a reputation for piety or learning their tombs in the Sanusiya lodges in which they resided became places of cult like those of their forerunners all over Cyrenaica. But unlike the earlier Marabouts these Sanusiya Brothers were not only holy men. They were also members of a fraternity, of an organization. The Sanusiya Order was thus not only heir to the accumulated capital of the Marabouts, but was able to exploit it as a corporation. It incorporated a number of isolated cults into a single wider cult, fractionized, it is true, by tribal particularisms, but, all the same, brought under a common organization. Each lodge of the Order was a cult centre, but it was something more: it was part of a general cult directed through the lodges towards the Head of the Order. The tribes of Cyrenaica became through the Order linked from above in a common, if loose, organization under a single, sacred, Head. This was possible only because a tribal system already existed uniting the different tribes, in spite of their feuds and enmities, into a society which, though lacking political unity, rested on common sentiments, a common way of life, and a common lineage structure.

What gave stability to this new relationship between the Bedouin tribes and the Sanusiya Order, turning the sacred Head into a secular leader and the religious organization into a government, and changed a loose federation of tribes into a

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THE SANUSIYA AND THE TRIBES

*795 find hereditary transmission of Shaikhship of lodges most
793 accentuated, such as the Bara'asa-Tamia section (al-Zawiya
613 al-Baida), the 'Awaqir-Sdaidi section (Msus zawiya), and the
428 'Abaidat-Ghaith section (Tart zawiya). In the same way the
[792] earlier Marabouts became, as has been noted, founders of
lineages which were on the pattern of the branches of the
Bedouin clans among whom they lived, and attached to them.

Also it must be remembered that the lodges were tribal
institutions built by the local Bedouin so that they might
participate in the *baraka* of Sayyid Muhammad bin 'Ali al-
Sanusi. They participated in it through the Shaikhs of their
zawiyas who received their *baraka* direct from the hands of the
Grand Sanusi himself, or from the hands of son Sayyid al-
Mahdi, and passed it on to their sons. This *baraka* belonged to
the tribe, or tribal section, which built a lodge just as the
shaukha, the secular Shaikhship of the tribe, or tribal section,
belonged to it and had to be kept in it. In both the continuity
of family succession had to be maintained, unless there were
good reasons for acting otherwise. Thus each tribal section
emphasized its autonomy in its hereditary line of religious
Shaikhs, through whom the *baraka* of the founder of the Order
was transmitted to them, whilst proclaiming its membership of
a tribal federation with common allegiance to the Head of the
Order.

*795 As I have pointed out when speaking of the sacred *Marabtin*
793 tribes of Cyrenaica, it was customary for the descendants of a
798 Marabout to reside near his tomb. I have further mentioned
[796] that the Shaikh of a Sanusiya lodge, who is also called a *Mara-*
bat by the Bedouin, might, if he had during life a reputation for
piety, rather easily gained in Islam, be venerated as a saint
when he was dead and his tomb become a shrine. This is
another reason why Shaikhly families have tended to become
hereditary directors of lodges.

*795 Just as almost all the Marabouts of Cyrenaica were foreigners
793 from the west, so were almost all the Shaikhs of the Sanusiya
554 lodges. The Dardafi and Isma'ili families came from Tripoli-
[67] tania, the Ghumari family from Morocco, the 'Ammur, Bu
Jibali, and Khattab families came from Algeria, and so on. As
a class they enjoyed, and still enjoy, a reputation for sanctity
among the Bedouin on account of their knowledge of the Koran

THE TURKISH ADMINISTRATION

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tion were compelled to pay taxes and furnish supplies, and how forty-five of the Shaikhs of the Jawazi tribe were treacherously murdered and many of their followers massacred.¹ Generally, however, it may be said that Cyrenaica has no history, other than Bedouin traditions of inter-tribal wars, from 1051 to 1835, in which year the Turks regained control of Libya from the Caramanlis. On their return they instituted a more systematic administration than had been exercised during their earlier occupation.

The Turks returned to Cyrenaica about the time the Grand Sanusi first visited the country and eight years after their reoccupation he founded his first zawiya on the plateau. As the Sanusiya Order gained the confidence of the Bedouin and became accepted as their spokesmen, it was necessary for the Ottoman authorities to take it into consideration in their dealings with the tribes of the interior. The Order made it possible for the different tribes to express themselves politically as a unit for the first time in their relations with the outside world. The tribes provided the Order with a social system, and the Order gave to that system a political organization at a time when it was beginning to be brought into more direct contact with political forces outside tribal society.

The Sanusiya is known to have been given a Charter about 1856 by Sultan 'Abd al-Majid I. His firman was brought from Istanbul by Sidi 'Abd al-Rahim al-Maghbub, later Shaikh of the Sanusiya zawiya at Banghazi, who had been sent to Istanbul for the purpose and had the utmost difficulty, as was often the case with visitors to the Ottoman capital, in obtaining an audience with the Sultan. Whatever other privileges the firman conferred on the Order—I have not seen the document—it certainly exempted its properties from taxation and permitted it to collect a religious tithe from its followers. A second firman was issued later by Sultan 'Abd al-Majid's brother, Sultan 'Abd al-'Aziz, and was brought from Istanbul to the Governor of Tripoli by Sidi Abu al-Qasim al-'Isawi, 'Abd al-Rahim's successor in the Banghazi lodge. There is in the Land Registry at Banghazi a letter from the Governor of Tripoli to the Governor of Banghazi giving the essence of this firman. It confirms the privileges granted by the earlier firman and adds to them that

¹ Op. cit., *passim* and p. 220 seq.

92 THE TURKISH ADMINISTRATION

*175 of the right of sanctuary within the precincts of the lodges of
*648 the Order. It is complimentary and written in the fulsome
*795 language of such documents.¹
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Nevertheless, the Turks were under no illusion. They did not believe that the Sanusi loved them, but they knew that if it came to a decision the Order and the Bedouin would support them against any of the Christian Powers of Europe. This is evident from the correspondence found in the archives of Tripoli by the Italians when they captured the town in 1911.² Shaikh Muhammad 'Uthman, writing in 1896, says frankly that the Turks were ill disposed towards the Sanusiya and would have liked to have taken Sayyid al-Mahdi to Istanbul and there given him a palace, the Turkish equivalent for *résidence forcée*; as they had done with Abu al-Huda, the Head of the Rifa'iya Order, and Shaikh Dafir, the Head of the Madaniya Order; and he adds that the Sayyid, on his side, had no liking for the Turks. When the Shaikh was in Banghazi the Shaikh of the Sanusiya lodge there was dismissed from his post by the Sayyid because he had allowed himself to be corrupted by the Turkish Authorities.³

The Ottoman Government was not much concerned about the exact juridical status of the Sanusiya Order, a question which greatly exercised Italian writers at a later date when this had become an important issue in their dealings with the Order. There were hundreds of Bedouin tribes and dozens of religious Orders in the Ottoman Empire and the Turks were matter-of-fact people who wisely left such questions alone. In the mosques under the Order's control the name of the Sultan was proclaimed at Friday prayers, but this means very little. Doubtless the Grand Sanusi and his successors took the view that the Caliphate had been usurped by the Ottoman Sultans—they could hardly have taken any other view—but it had long been in Ottoman hands and Turkey was the only independent Muslim Power capable of protecting Muslim interests. In practice also they accepted the secular authority of the Sultan as ruler of the Ottoman Empire.

¹ Salim bin 'Amir, op. cit., May 1944.

[113] ² Published in 1912 with the title *Relazione fra Turchi e Senussi. Documenti rinvenuti nell' Archivio di Tripoli* (Ufficio Politico Militare). Quoted by Macaluso, op. cit.

³ Op. cit., pp. 65-6 and 106.

THE FIRST ITALO-SANUSI WAR

1912 for the same purpose by British sympathizers with the Arab cause and Indian Muslims.

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On 13 April 1913 Gen. d'Alessandro attacked the Turco-Arab camp at Banina and after 10 hours' heavy fighting took it by assault, killing 200 men and capturing about 50 prisoners and much equipment. The Turco-Arabs from this time onwards abandoned any further attempt to hold a line and organized resistance gave way to the kind of guerrilla warfare the country, inferiority in numbers and arms, and lack of military training of the Arabs indicated as the most appropriate tactics. The Italians were therefore able to advance rapidly in column in the grand style and to defeat Arab bands wherever they met them by superiority in numbers and fire power. They occupied Bu Mariyam, al-Abyar, Taukra, al-Baniya, and Jardis al-'Abid. While this column, the 2nd Division under Gen. d'Alessandro, was advancing on Jardis al-'Abid a second column, the 4th Division under Gen. Tassoni, disembarked at Talmaitha after a sharp engagement, and from there advanced on al-Marj and took the village. The two Divisions then met at Jardis al-'Abid. From there the 4th Division moved eastwards and in mid-May took without much opposition Marawa, Slanta, Shahhat, Marsa Susa, and other points. The ease with which they were able to march through the country and the way in which the Bedouin bands nine times out of ten gave way to them on the field, made the Italians take too optimistic a view of the campaign. They had yet to learn that marching from point to point and occupying the points does not make any great impression on an enemy for whom places have little significance, and that it is one thing to force Bedouin bands to give ground and quite a different thing to conquer a hardy and elusive people scattered over a wild and rugged country. The whole country was up in arms and the general will to resistance was now strengthened by the arrival on the field of Sayyid Ahmad al-Sharif from Jaghbub and a Turco-Arab victory shortly afterwards, an event the Bedouin naturally attributed to the Sayyid's *baraka*. This victory was in the Darna sector.

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After the fighting in the autumn on the periphery of the town

The Proliferation of Segments

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days on which kin of various sorts should attend the mourning ceremonies, which extend over a period of a week. Allowance is made for those who may be away temporarily, although they are expected to hasten to the mourning camp as quickly as possible. Agnatic kin are expected not only to be present on the appropriate day, but are required to offer gifts consistent with their relationship to the bereaved; agnates of the tertiary segment are expected to offer a sheep, while some cognates ought to bring a goat and others a quantity of sugar and tea. At one funeral in a camp where I was resident, soon after the death occurred, the main concern of its inhabitants was whether or not certain men of their section would attend the mourning rites and bring appropriate gifts with them. These men lived at the time in another camp a few miles away, as they had been doing for several years past. They did not come when they were expected, and when they finally arrived at the end of the week they brought with them gifts of sugar and tea only—gifts which were totally inappropriate for agnates of the group. They were, in fact, now no longer members of it, and my neighbours were able to tell me, 'They have branched off from us. We will never live together again.' The lineage had proliferated and this was the first occasion for showing it.

Wide-spread in Cyrenaica is a cult of saints. The number of saints' tombs varies from tribe to tribe, there being fewer among the camel herders of the semi-desert than among the cow-herding, almost sedentary, folk of the plateau area. Whatever the number, the members of the group that venerates a particular saint make an annual pilgrimage to his tomb, and sometimes more frequent pilgrimages are made. In one area there were two men, accepted by their respective kin groups as leaders, who vied against each other for the leadership of their section. One of them had been a famous warrior during the Italian wars and, after being injured, fled to Egypt where he lived for seventeen years, until he returned to his homeland in 1947. The other had also fought against the Italians, failed to win renown, was a captive for a time, later released, and subsequently appointed leader of his section by the Italian authorities. The first, during his period of exile, had become impoverished. The second during his years of freedom had prospered. As far as their personalities

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794 were concerned, there was little doubt who was leader—the
 554 name of the former was known throughout the land. Now when
 794 the warrior returned from his Egyptian exile, his rival offered
 554 him a sheep as a gift. This act was wholly appropriate. Subse-
 578 quently they continued to compete fiercely, but it soon became
 clear that the returned warrior was winning the greater support.
 In the face of this, the rival, in 1948, decided to break with tradi-
 [788] tion by staying away from the annual pilgrimage to the tomb of
 [175] the local saint. Instead, he and his followers made their pilgrim-
 age to a different tomb in the vicinity of their camp, and later
 built a low wall round the tomb, whitewashed it, and made it
 known that henceforward they would regularly use it for pilgrim-
 [613] ages. The two kinship groups of a tertiary section now had their
 [798] separate saint's tomb. Some months later, the rival decided to
 794 move with his small group to an area in which they had not pre-
 554 viously resided. It is the custom among the Bedouin when they
 578 pitch their tents in a place for the first time, that the people of
 431 the neighbourhood should bring them gifts to mark the event.
 [166] The returned warrior, who had now become a close neighbour
 of his rival was obliged, like others, to offer the latter a gift; he
 was also obliged to return the gift of a sheep that he had been
 given on rejoining his section in 1947. He brought a gift within a
 few hours of his rival's arrival, but it was a goat.¹⁴ The rival and
 his followers were furious, and the argument that the warrior was
 too poor to give more was dismissed summarily. This was the
 final insult. The donor, in return, had been given less than he had
 presented. The reciprocity of gift exchanges had not only been
 arrested, it had been reversed. From then onwards the two groups
 made no attempt to conceal their hostility and went their sepa-
 rate ways.

613 Disputes stemming from circumstances such as these are the
 578 occasions which mark the proliferation of groups, although in
 all three cases cited, difficulties over water supplies had pre-
 ceded the outbreaks of quarrelling.

613 In this discussion of the ways in which proliferation of seg-
 602 ments takes place, the emphasis had been put on the tug of war
 121 between the interests of people in their agnatic connexions and

¹⁴ A goat is inferior to a sheep in gift exchanges.

THE CAMEL-HERDING BEDOUIN OF CYRENAICA

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1950, but his kind of tyranny was absent from the Cyrenaica of that period. From the mid-nineteenth century until the Italian invasion of 1911, the Sanusi Order established itself, spread its lodges throughout the tribes and in other more remote lands until it became what Evans-Pritchard speaks of as a theocratic empire.¹ The lodges served as areas of sanctuary and their staffs adjudicated disputes. Leaders of the Order had the power to coerce and the Bedouin obeyed. They obeyed out of personal regard for some of them in 1950, but the religious authority previously used by the leaders had given way to the political power they now exercised as functionaries in a state system. In the meantime, the country had been ravaged by the long Italo-Sanusi wars. Throughout the nineteen-thirties after suffering terrible privations and reduction in numbers through slaughter in war, death in concentration camps, and exile, the Bedouin were ruled by the Italians. During the Second World War the armies of three major contestants fought their battles where the Bedouin now tend their flocks and herds. After the war they were left to fend for themselves, with a minimum of administrative interference.

In the light of all this the conception of an equilibrium system is of little heuristic value, still less its derivative concept of a repetitive system. This does not mean, however, that an account of part of the social life of the Bedouin as it existed in 1950 must be nothing more than a disconnected piece of history, unrelated to a prior state of things and wholly useless for the understanding of the contemporary oil-producing cum mixed pastoral-agricultural economy. It would be little more than a piece of social historiography if the analysis was based on the concept of a total social structure of functionally interconnected parts, forming what Leach describes as 'a delicately balanced mechanism rather like the various parts of a wrist watch'.² Such a viewpoint would effectively exclude any possible comprehension of changes save those present as part of the dynamics of a system; its only answer to change is an account of a different system. If, instead, attention is focused on the analysis of a field of components arranged in a specific fashion to meet the interests of men at a particular time, it then becomes possible to see how a shift in their positions, the addition of new components, or the elimination of others produces this or that effect. It can make intelligible what has gone before, and if the future cannot be anticipated it can be demarcated within rough limits.

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modern territory of his tribe. See also Hamilton, 1816.

¹ Evans-Pritchard, 1949. In this book a brilliant account is given of the development of the Order,

and how it came to unify and provide centralized political leadership for the tribes.

² Leach, 1961, p. 6.

Cases

The Meaning of Marriage

581 Until marriage the changes in a man's life have been in the nature of
585 an ordered sequence of development from a child to be cared for — the only
342 time in his life when a father, without inhibition, showers on him his love
[593] and affection — to one who, by degrees, makes an increasing contribution to
a production unit. Marriage necessitates that a man pitch a tent for himself.
With a tent he becomes a potential host and protector of others. The local
idiom for marriage is "to set up a tent." It would be quite improper to use
[196] the verb "to marry" when inquiring whether a marriage has taken place
[195] since this verb also has the meaning of "to have sexual intercourse." In-
stead the euphemism, "Have you pitched a tent?" is used. The Arabic word
for a tent in this context is *Bait*. It is not used to refer to a military tent, nor
to the small tent which shelters only a widow. It is reserved for the Bedouin
tent, which usually has a wool top, and, most importantly, holds the promise
of the continuation of life, whether it shelters a newly married couple, a
mature family or young unmarried people. (The word *Bait* represents a
complex concept, and it would be too much of a diversion here to discuss
the various points of its significance. It is essential to understand that its
meaning is not confined to a tent in the physical sense.) Its top has *Baraka*
(divine goodness) in it; the quality of *Haram*, which makes it possible for the
tent to be used as a sanctuary, is associated with it and this quality of *Haram*
extends, moreover, to the ropes of the tent, so that anyone who clutches them
comes under the protection of the owner. In it, the wife must permanently
reside and her husband has the legal right to insist on this. In it too, he
has the legal right of sexual access to a woman, his wife. Any children
born in it he can claim as his own. With the erection of a tent the son
[885] reaches adulthood, and it is in this sense that he can be said to have acquired
a domain of his own.

581 Marriage gives a son greater freedom and less dependence on his father
585 in another sense. A second euphemism used for marriage is "making a
[593] relationship," specifically an affinal one. Relationships between a man and
[195] his father-in-law are diverse and are used in various ways in different situa-
tions. Here, the particular aspect which needs to be stressed is that a man
606 can cajole his father-in-law, and (through his wife) wealth, in the form
425 of animals, may pass from the former to the latter. Reciprocal gifts are passed
556 between affines on certain occasions, but in addition small amounts may
pass which are not connected with the formal occasions of exchanges. Debt
583 lies between them. It begins with the initiation of marriage negotiations,
584 when the suitor's kinsmen take a prescribed number of sheep to present to
606 the girl's father if negotiations are successful. They promise to transfer
bride-wealth^o to the girl's father. A few weeks after the marriage, the hus-

[191] ^o I use the word "bride-wealth" because it has become so familiar in the literature;
but the only similarity between the *Sahiba* of the Bedouin and the bride-wealth of

THE WESTERN BEDOUIN

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maintained to this day in the desert between the last two and the Sa'adi, though they are relaxed in the cultivation. 619 651

The Jumei'at, who used to be "Murabitin" to the Beni 'Una, are now nominally so to the Awlad 'Ali, but are not required to pay tribute. Other tribes, such as the Jawabis and 'Awarma, are in an intermediate stage between the Sa'adi and the Murabitin. The Awlad 'Abd es-Sallam, the Samalus ed-Diminat, and perhaps the Fawakhir, call themselves "Murabitin bil Baraka", a priestly caste which, in Tripoli, used to receive special privileges from the Turkish Government. 619 [778] •

Though the Sa'adi tribes despise the Murabitin as serfs, they respect them for their piety and resort to them for the writing of charms. [186]

While the Murabitin tribes generally may be suspected to contain more Libyan blood than the Sa'adi, there are other tribes such as the 'Amayim, the Jahama, and the Tarhuna, who have come to Egypt from further west than any of the above, and who seem to be quite definitely "Berber", though, of course, none of them will admit it. These are known euphemistically as 'Arab el-Gharb.

Even some of the Juheina, settled east of the Nile in Sharqiya, are scorned by Klippel as "d'origine berbère, se pretendant section d'une tribu d'Arabie".¹

Awlad 'Ali.—This tribe, by far the most important of the Western Bedouin, occupies with its vassals the whole north coast of Egypt from Salum to Alexandria. Like the others, they claim descent from the Beni Suleim, alleging their ancestor 'Ali, son of 'Aqar, to be a grandson of that Dib, or Abu Dib, mentioned by Ibn Khaldun. Their enemies, however, allege that he was a Jew. "When the Arabs occupied the north coast of Africa, there was a notable, a Jew, who owned property at Saqiet el-Hamra in Morocco. This man welcomed and entertained the Arab sheikh Ez-Zanati. He became very popular with the sheikh, who gave him his daughter named Sa'ada, on condition that he embraced Islam before the marriage contract was made out."² Another version calls the Jew Yana, and says that he had two daughters. Of these Sa'ada was the [131] 619 173

¹ E. Klippel, "Etudes sur le folklore Bédouin de l'Égypte," *Bull. Soc. Khédiv. de Géogr.*, vii, 10, Cairo, 1911. [113]

² From information collected by Muhammad Bey Wassef.